

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSC-05
DODE-00 NSAE-00 L-01 SP-02 PM-03 PA-01 IO-06
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R 101335Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7943
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T KABUL 3813

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, CENTO, AF, PK, IR, UR
SUBJECT: A DARK CLOUD OVER PUSHTUNISTAN NO LARGER THAN A FIST

REF: A. ISLAMBAD 4581, B. KABUL 3733, C. TEHRAN 4356,
D. KABUL 3635

1. SUMMARY. THE AFGHAN PRESS IS HIGHLIGHTING CONGRATULATIONS TO THE TARAKI GOVERNMENT FROM "PUSHTUNISTAN" AND MEETINGS OF AFGHAN LEADERS WITH "PUSHTUN AND BALUCH BROTHERS." BOTH THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR AND I HAVE EXPRESSED OUR CONCERNS TO THE AFGHAN FOREIGN MINISTRY ABOUT THIS REVIVAL OF THIS PAK-AFGHAN DISPUTE. END SUMMARY

2. LIKE THE PAKISTANIS AND IRANIANS (REFTELS B AND C), I, TOO, AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE EXCESSIVE ATTENTION THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED AFGHAN MEDIA ARE DIRECTING TOWARD THE "JOYOUS" REACTION OF THE PUSHTUN AND BALUCH
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TRIBES OF PAKISTAN OVER THE VICTORIOUS KHALQIST REVOLUTION IN AFGHANISTAN. OBSERVERS AT KABUL ARE BECOMING KEENLY AWARE OF THE STRONG INFLUENCE OF PUSHTUNISTAN EXTREMISTS IN THE NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT. ON MAY 8, FOR EXAMPLE, RADIO AFGHANISTAN ANNOUNCED THAT KHAN ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN (WHO HAPPENED TO BE IN KABUL FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT AT THE TIME OF THE REVOLUTION), "THE RESPECTED

AND CRUSADING PERSONAGE WHO SHOWED THE WAY OF FREEDOM TO THE STRUGGLING PUSHTUN AND BALUCH PEOPLES, "HAD MET THAT MORNING WITH PRIME MINISTER NOOR MOHAMMAD TARAKI, WHOM HE CONGRATULATED UPON "THE SUCCESS OF THE DEMOCRATIC-NATIONAL REVOLUTION IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE DECISIVE SUCCESS OF THE AFGHAN REVOLUTIONARY, FREE, AND BRAVE ARMY UPON THE FALSE AND CUNNING SARDARI REGIME (I.E., REGIME OF PRIMCES)". AJMAL KHATTAK, PROMINENT PAKISTANI LEFTIST EXILE AND PROMOTER OF PUSHTUNISTAN PROPAGANDA, WAS ALSO REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN PRESENT AT THAT MORNING MEETING. THE REPORT ALSO ADDED THAT "PACHA KHAN" (ONE OF THE TITLES OF RESPECT AFGHANS USE FOR KHAN ABDUL GHAFAR KHAN) AND AJMAL KHATTAK, SUBSEQUENTLY HAD LUNCH AT REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS WITH TARAKI, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER BABRAK KARMAL, AND -- AMONG OTHERS -- NEZAMUDDIN TAHZIB, NEW MINISTER OF FRONTIERS AFFAIRS (WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR PUSHTUN AND BALUCH TRIBES ON THE PAKISTANI SIDE OF THE DURAND LINE).

3. PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR ARSHAD TOLD ME ON MAY 9 THAT HE REGARDS THESE ACTIVITIES AS "PROVOCATIVE" AND THAT HE HAD SPOKEN FIRMLY ABOUT THEM TO FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN. I TOLD HIM WHAT AMIN HAD TOLD ME ON MAY 7 TO THE EFFECT THAT AFGHAN NONALIGNMENT WOULD BE AFFECTED BY PAKISTANI (AND IRANIAN) ACTIONS (PARA 5, KABUL 3635). I TOLD ARSHAD I HAD IN MIND SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT THIS
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TO DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER DOST WHEN I PAID MY FIRST CALL ON DOST, AND ARSHAD ENCOURAGED ME TO DO SO.

4. I CALLED ON DOST ON MAY 10. I TOLD HIM THAT IT HAD BEEN MY IMPRESSION THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAD TOLD ME THAT AFGHANISTAN'S ABILITY TO STAY NONALIGNED WOULD DEPEND IN PART ON THE ATTITUDE OF IRAN AND PAKISTAN. DOST SAID I HAD MISUNDERSTOOD, THAT AFGHANISTAN WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH BOTH IRAN AND PAKISTAN, AND WOULD BE CERTAIN TO TRY TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEMS PEACEFULLY. BEYOND THAT, HE SAID, IT IS UP TO IRAN AND PAKISTAN TO DEMONSTRATE THEIR FRIENDSHIP.

5. I THEN TOLD DOST THAT I AM CONCERNED ABOUT A NEW SET OF REFERENCES IN THE KABUL PRESS ABOUT PUSHTUNISTAN, MEETINGS WITH PUSHTUN AND BALUCH LEADERS, ETC. I SAID I WAS CONCERNED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WAS SITTING THINGS UP AGAIN. DOST REPLIED THAT AMBASSADOR ARSHAD HAD SPOKEN TO HIM IN A SIMILAR VEIN. HE HAD MENTIONED TO ARSHAD THAT THE PAKISTANI PRESS IN RECENT DAYS HAD SAID SOME UNTRUE THINGS ABOUT AFGHANISTAN. THIS SORT OF MIS-UNDERSTANDING COULD NOT ALWAYS BE AVOIDED. BUT HE HAD

TOLD ARSHAD, AS HE TOLD ME, THAT AFGHANISTAN WANTS GOOD RELATIONS WITH PAKISTAN AND WANTS TO SOLVE ANY PROBLEMS PEACEFULLY. I SAID I WAS REASSURED BY THIS STATEMENT.

6. COMMENT: I BELIEVE IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR ME AT THE OUTSET OF THE NEW AFGHAN REGIME TO MAKE CLEAR OUR POSITION ON PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS. BUT, AS WE HAVE NOTED IN OTHER MESSAGES, ONE CANNOT BE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE TARAKI GOVERNMENT WILL LET THE PUSHTUNISTAN ISSUE ALONE.
ELIOT

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